LCCC PEACEPLUS Partnership

**Minutes of the proceedings of the LCCC PEACEPLUS Partnership**

**Held online (zoom) Monday 18th December 2023 at 5pm**

# In Attendance - Partnership:

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| Cllr Jonathan Craig | DUP |
| Cllr Uel Mackin | DUP |
| Cllr Andrew Gowan (Mayor)  | DUP |
| Cllr John Laverty | DUP |
| Ald Amanda Grehan | APNI |
| Ald Michelle Guy | APNI |
| Cllr Claire Kemp | APNI |
| Cllr Gretta Thompson  | APNI |
| Cllr Alan Martin | UUP |
| Cllr Gary McCleave (Deputy Mayor) | SF |
| Cllr John Gallen  | SDLP |
| Des Marley  | NIHE |
| Johnny Crymble  | EA |
| Lynda Vladeneau  | SEHSCT |
| Mabel Scullion  | Early Intervention Lisburn |
| Aidie Bird | Resurgam Trust |
| Diane Ewart  | TADA Rural Network |
| Caroline Birch  | Helping Hands Autism |
| Thomas McKenna | Killultagh |
| Lynsey Agnew | Lisburn North |
| Marc Cairns | Downshire East |

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# Secretariat/ Other Attendees:

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| Angela McCann | Head of Communities |
| Louise Moore | Director Leisure & Wellbeing |
| Niamh O’Carolan | Peace Manager |
| Catharine McWhirter | Community Planning Manager |
| Lorraine McCourt  | Consultant (for LCCC) |

**One item – Approval of Expression of Interest (EoI) Form for Theme 1**

The Chair, Cllr Craig, welcomed members and invited Angela to update the Partnership with progress made since the previous meeting. Angela confirmed that changes were made to the funding thresholds on the EoI form based on the recommendations from the previous meeting. She emphasised that the process for selection was 2 stage – the completed form is assessed by a panel, then a recommendation made by the Partnership for inclusion in the Action Plan and SEUPB makes the final decision on all projects.

She stressed the importance of the call for Expression of Interest forms being opened the first week of January as timing is critical. This will be followed by 4 information sessions (1 in Lisburn, 1 Castlereagh, 1 rural and 1 online) and a deadline 4 weeks after the call opens. They will be then be assessed and passed to Partnership for approval. Niamh delivered a summary of the guidance notes and explaining the requirements and criteria of the EoI.

Cllr McCleave enquired about the timing of acquisition of a land lease in case a group is in the process of doing so. Angela confirmed this was fine as long as a group was in the process of getting a lease or buying land, it is evidenced and this is in place by the stage the Letter of Offer is issued to Council (possibly September 2024). Cllr Mackin felt asking for supporting documents at point of application may be unfair as not all organisations may be at a stage where they have all this information.

Lorraine McCourt explained that in respect to the ownership / lease of land, the Partnership needs to reassure SEUPB that all aspects of the project are deliverable in the timeframe, with a clear timeline for planning issues or leases as this will be assessed by the Steering Committee. She emphasised that projects need to meet the cross community benefits.

Ald Grehan asked would EoIs be assessed and ranked and Angela confirmed this and continued that once ranked the EoIs are put forward as a recommendation for inclusion in the Peaceplus Action Plan to be approved by the Peaceplus Partnership.

There was a general discussion about how the assessing panel should be comprised, how many and who should sit on it to ensure that it is equitable and there’s no conflict of interest. Angela stressed the need to get the Expression of Interest formed approved due to the critical timeline for launch adding that representation on the assessment panel could be considered at the next meeting.

Cllr Laverty enquired if other councils followed the same governance in terms of the panel composition. Angela clarified that each council works differently setting their own approach but within the parameters of SEUPB guidelines. Lorraine concurred with this saying some councils will use council officers while others employ both officers and Partnership members to sit on the panel. Cllr Laverty concluded that he wasn’t comfortable about making a decision on this now.

Consideration was given to how the panel would be made up and Lorraine explained that there were advantages to working with our statutory members due to their expertise and knowledge of the Peaceplus programme.

I was generally acknowledged that there was a very tight timescale for groups to apply and Angela reassured the members that there would be assistance in the form of information sessions but that groups would need to be in a certain state of readiness.

Cllr Gowan asked if our council was being more stringent than other councils in terms of what we are requesting from groups regarding thresholds and information but Lorraine confirmed our process is similar to that of other councils adding that projects need to be of a significant scale to impact on cross community benefits. She reminder members that groups can also apply for grants under investment 1.2.

Des Marley called for a balanced approach that is open and transparent and getting the message out as soon as possible. Cllr Mackin believed that smaller groups would be penalised being asked for certain documentation like business plans and feasibility studies but Niamh clarified that groups would not be scored on this. Niamh further reminded members that once a group was included in the Action Plan, they became a partner and would have to administer and manage the project themselves. Furthermore financial claims are made retrospectively and, as such, the organisation would need to have bank reserves to cover the period of verification before they are reimbursed.

Cllr Craig asked that the members approve the Expression of Interest form with some minor alterations.

**RESOLVED: The Expression of Interest form was approved**

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**Proposed Cllr John Laverty Seconded Lynsey Caqeua**

The meeting closed at 6.30pm.

Next meeting TBC.